

by every wind of passion, and hopelessly facing tragic misery and failure. Helpless, hopeless humanity appealed to him. He felt that only the restoration of religion, of the interior life of the individual, of prayer and union with the Holy Spirit, of interior peace and fortitude, could heal the sorrows of mankind and restore to order the welter of the world. He was a leader of his age. The lesson he preached and taught was that men must come back to God, live in His presence, seeking his guidance and grace by constant and abiding prayer.

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In 1865, with seven priests, he set himself the gigantic task of converting America. One of them died almost immediately, and in a letter Father Hecker wrote at the time is revealed the fearless soul of the man who knew he could do all things in the strength given by God to His apostles: "We are only six. Two of these quite broken down. A fine set of fellows we are to set afoot the conversion of the country. Don't be alarmed. We have now taken root in eternity." He believed in the perfection of exterior work, but he also believed that labor not inspired and fired by interior perfection and constant prayer would be fruitless. He saw what an army the Church would have if only individual Catholic men and women would become not only faithful children, but faithful missionaries of Christ, illustrating, explaining both by example and by word, in their lives and in their speech, the doctrines of the Church and the right social and ethical principles of questions of the day. He labored and toiled for a well-informed laity, and for an effective Catholic press. He would have the laity vigilant, tireless, and aggressive workers for the cause of Christ in the world. This earnest convert never tired of telling Catholics that the Church is the guide given us by God and that it is there we must go for the solution of all problems. What men the age wants if we are to win back the world, Father Hecker tells us in the following words of solemn importance: "The age is superficial: it needs the gift of *wisdom*, which enables the soul to contemplate truth in its ultimate causes. The age is materialistic: it needs the gift of *intelligence*, by the light of which the intellect penetrates into the essence of things. The age is captivated by a false and one-sided science: it needs the gift of *science*, by the light of which is seen each order of truth in its true relation to other orders and in a divine unity. The age is in disorder and is ignorant of the way to true progress: it needs the gift of *counsel*, which teaches how to choose the proper means to attain an object. The age is impious: it needs the gift of *piety*, which leads the soul to look up to God as the Heavenly Father, and to adore Him with feelings of filial affection and love. The age is sensual and effeminate: it needs the gift of *fortitude*, which imparts to the will the strength to endure the greatest burdens, and to prosecute the greatest enterprises with ease and heroism. The age has lost and almost forgotten God: it needs the gift of *fear* to bring the soul again to God, and make it feel conscious of its responsibilities and destiny. Men endowed with these gifts are the men for whom, if it but knew, the age calls. Men whose minds are enlightened and whose wills are strengthened by an increased action of the Holy Spirit. Men whose souls are actuated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Men whose countenances are lit up with a heavenly joy, who breathe an inward peace, and act with a holy liberty and a resistless energy. One such soul does more to advance the kingdom of God than tens of thousands without these gifts. These are the men and this is the way, if the age could be only made to see it and believe it, to universal restoration, universal reconciliation, and universal progress, as far as such boons are attainable." Father Hecker realised that in the world there are two great forces arrayed against each other: the Church which stands for justice, truth, order, and morality; and the revolutionary spirit—the logical off-

spring of Protestantism—which makes for godlessness, disorder, and ruin. "Only the universal principles of reason and revelation grasped and welded by such an organic world power as the Catholic Church can guide aright the tumultuous masses of mankind when the transition from one phase of civilisation to another has begun." He saw clearly the need for religious education. He felt that secular schools were sowing the seeds of personal irresponsibility, of ignorance of the moral law, of forgetfulness of God. He condemned vehemently the upholders of the secular system which was sapping in the souls of the youth of America the foundations of religion and driving them into infidelity. Mindful of the work of women in the past, he emphasised their wonderful power for good in the present age. He would have them become active apostles, ready and willing to bear the message of Catholic truth and Catholic love and to extend the kingdom of God on earth. No man knew better what a power for good is mother, sister, wife, or friend, and how love for a good woman can influence men when perhaps nothing else can.

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Father Hecker is dead and gone to his reward. His spiritual children carry on nobly and fruitfully the work to which he called them. In the pulpit and in the press, the Paulist Fathers are doing real apostolic work for the kingdom of God to-day, following faithfully in the footsteps of their great founder, and teaching men and women to find in the Church the secret of peace and strength, through prayer and union with the Holy Spirit of God. He is long dead, but his message remains. May the burning words of this zealous convert lead our readers to see the Church as he saw it, to love it as he did, and to find in it all the happiness that he found. May they lead us all to cultivate within ourselves the gifts of the Holy Spirit which can reform the world—Wisdom, Understanding, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord, in which are the true remedies for all the social and national evils of humanity to-day.

NOTES

Protestant Literature

We are not going to deal here with that filth and scurrility which in New Zealand has come to be known as "Protestant Literature." Our remarks concern the laughable efforts at fiction made by Protestant authors who try to portray with some show of truth the Catholic Church. The books that these people write are in matter of fact humorous books. Possibly those for whom they were written see no fun in them, but for the most ignorant Catholic reader who is foolish enough to go through them they abound in ridiculous absurdities. Once in a while it is good to have a laugh: Horace told us so long ago, and even St. Thomas Aquinas agrees with him. *Faute de mieux*, let us enjoy those dear simpletons who write from abysmal depths of ignorance concerning us.

"The Bonfire"

The other day we picked up a book called *The Bonfire*. The picture of a stern, Torquemada-looking Jesuit on the wrapper urged us to look through it. It was a treat. It tried to describe life in a Jesuit college—from a quasi-sympathetic point of view too. But ignorance shrieked aloud from every page, and a more grotesque book could hardly be written. We mention a few examples. Describing a Benediction Service, we get: "The priest followed with slow, majestic steps. He was arrayed in a silken *chausable*, which shone like purple or gold in the light, while jewels sewn on it glittered like little eyes. His large square-toed boots showed now and then beneath the *white lace* which adorned the hem of his *cassock*."

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